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QA-18889

FHWA-97-2233-14

June 8, 1994

FHWA/FTA Docket 94-11
Federal Highway Administration
Room 4232
HCC-10
Office of Chief Counsel
400 Seventh Street, S.W.
Washington, D. C. 20590

94 JUN 15 10:52
LEADS/NEGS. DIV.

Dear Sir/Madam:

The Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality authorization and subsequent appropriations represent historic steps in our recognition at the national level of negative externalities resultant from our four decade development of single occupant vehicle capacity.

The Metropolitan Transit Authority respectfully submits:

- 1) The Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality program will encounter problems in timely project obligation so long as it is administered by offices primarily responsible for single occupant vehicle capacity and funded by taxes on fuel consumption. The fact that Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality projects are being reviewed more strenuously than "routine" single occupant vehicle projects is indicative of the systemic tendencies.
- 2) The analysis of cost effectiveness must be required to include the dilution of air quality benefits which are coincident with the iterative impacts of capacity expansion for single occupant vehicles.

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- 3) The use of Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality funds for replacement of transit bus and van power trains from traditional diesel to EPA compliant power trains should be given highest priority.
- 4) The basic chemistry of ozone generation, dispersion, concentration and timing should be clearly identified and widely disseminated. Millions of dollars are being committed daily to projects which offer limited benefit while projects which actually produce decrements in regional air quality over the life of the improvement are also being approved.
- 5) Uniform, specific guidance allowing not less than ninety percent federal share for park and ride lots, high occupancy vehicle treatments, and temporary operating assistance for transit projects should be issued promptly.
- 6) The land use strategies of transit based mixed use developments which include emphasis on reduction of vehicle miles of travel, fuel consumption, and daily trips should be made eligible for Congestion Mitigation Air Quality funding.
- 7) The debate over the speed of obligation of projects is complicated both by the delay in federal regulation promulgation and the prohibition in many states and the reluctance in even more states to dedicate local funds to the projects.
- 8) The failure of several State Implementation Plans to include effective use of Transportation Control Measures indicates a lack of commitment to the fundamental principles of air quality management.

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- 9) The current Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality regulations ignore emphasis on the largest quantity emissions in our atmosphere: carbon dioxide. Swift inclusion of regulations regarding carbon dioxide are needed.

In sum, the Congestion Mitigation and Air Quality program is the first to shift our attention from the positive economic productivity assumptions of single occupant vehicle capacity expansion to the efficient management of surface transportation in a balanced view. Even the most conservative public groups we speak with, those who rankle at restrictions on single occupant vehicles, reluctantly agree that improving the air and congestion efficiency characteristics of our nation's largest ever public works project is appropriate. To do less represents foolish stewardship of our past investments and our future quality of life.

Sincerely,



Robert T. Babbitt
Executive Director

RTB/js1